



State of Connecticut
HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

Testimony in Opposition to
Senate Bill Number 1057
Senate Bill Number 1064
House Bill Number 5004
Government Administration and Elections Committee
February 22, 2023

Chairs Senator Flexer and Representative Blumenthal, Ranking Members Senator Sampson and Representative Mastrofrancesco and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to **Senate Bill 1057: *An Act Concerning the Secretary of State and Early Voting*, Senate Bill 1064: *An Act Concerning the Implementation of Early Voting*, and House Bill 5004: *An Act Implementing Early Voting*.**

The committee has before it three proposals developing a framework for early voting. The bills are largely identical but contain different time periods and scope of application. Addressing the scope of application first, the members of the House Republican caucus support the limited scope of application contained in S.B. 1057 which limits early voting to general elections and primaries. Applying early voting to special elections and referendums places too high a burden on our local voting officials consistently throughout the entire election year. Under the proposals contained in S.B. 1064 and H.B. 5004, every budget referendum or request for bonding for a specific local purpose would need to be supervised by the registrar of voters for 18 or 14 days. This is too much to ask from many of our small towns, especially those whose registrars only work on a part-time basis. We suggest the committee proceed cautiously, allowing our town clerks and registrars to get accustomed to any new early voting process before asking them to carry it out repeatedly without knowledge of the practical challenges they will be forced to confront.

With regard to the different time frames contained in these bills, the House Republican Caucus proposes an alternative that is more limited; a total of three days of early voting – two weekdays and one weekend day. This limited approach will place a lighter burden on our municipal officials, allowing them to ease into the new requirements in a limited fashion while still allowing for a total of four days of voting when you include Election Day. This is a sufficient amount of time for an individual to vote in person, it accommodates individuals who work weekends as well as those who have a traditional Monday through Friday schedule.

We appreciate the Government Administration and Elections Committee's consideration of our alternative proposals and we look forward to continued discussions on the development of Connecticut's early voting framework.